

The Bloomfield Gazette.

WILLIAM P. LYON, A. M., & Editors.
CHARLES M. DAVIS, A. M.

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Knowledge and wisdom, far from being one, have oftentimes no connection. Knowledge dwells
In heads replete with thoughts of other men; Wisdom in minds attentive to their own.—COWPER.

BLOOMFIELD, N. J., SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28, 1872.

FIVE CENTS.

CHRISTMAS SEASON.

CHURCH BELLS.

Wake me to-night, my mother dear,
That I may hear
The Christmas Bells, so soft and clear
To high and low glad tidings tell,
How God the Father loved us well,
How God the Eternal Son
Came unto us what we had done;
How God the Paradise,
Who in the chaste womb formed the Babe so
sweet.

In power and glory came, the birth to aid and
greet.

Wake me, that I the twelvemonth long
May bear the song
About with me in the world's strong;
That treasured joys of Christmas tide
May with mine hour of gloom abide;

The Christmas Carol ring

Deep in my heart, when I would sing;

Each of the twelve good days

Its earnest yield of dubious love and praise,

Ensuring happy months, and halloving common
ways.

Wake me again, my mother dear,
That I may hear

The peal of the departing year.

O well I love, the step of Time—

Should move to that familiar rhyme:

Fair fall the tones that steep

The Old Year in the dews of sleep;

The New guide softly;

With hopes to sweet and memories akin!

Long may that soothing cadence ear, heart, com-

sience win—*Kelde.*

CHRISTMAS—ITS ANCIENT CUSTOMS.

The earliest writers on the festivities of the Christmas season speak of the custom of decking houses and churches with evergreens, and therefore it appears to us that it must be of very ancient date, it being, in fact, one of those ancient remnants of paganism, which, although forbidden by the councils of the early Christian Church, had obtained too great a hold on the prejudices of the people to be readily relinquished, as its transmission down to the present day, all over Europe, serves to prove.

The holly and ivy have been the favorite evergreens throughout Great Britain and Ireland for the above purpose. They are regarded as sacred emblems of the season, even to the present day. Indeed, it is not Christmas unless the village church handsomely decked out with them, and likewise the cottage parlors.

In Ireland especially this custom is carried almost to extravagance, and, indeed, also in England. The humblest cottage and the poorest church have their share of the holly and ivy; every picture is crowded with them; and the more historic the picture, the larger the quantity placed over it. Heathenish though it may seem to be, it has beautiful associations, and when we remember the number of centuries it has been the custom, we surely cannot blame the people for having a reverence for it, particularly when all classes, from the highest to the lowest, rever it. Here is an old ballad, written centuries since, by whom we will never know till the last trumpet sounds:

THE IVY.

Ivy, chief of trees it is,

Veni coronabis.

The most worthy is she in town;

He who says other, says a lie;

Worthy is she to bear the crown;

Veni coronabis.

Ivy is soft and sleek of speech,

Against all who she bringeth bliss;

Happy is he that may her reach;

Veni coronabis.

Ivy is green, of color bright,

Of all trees the chief she is;

And that I prove will now be right;

Veni coronabis.

Ivy, she bears berries black;

God grant to all of us his bles;

For then we shall nothing lack;

Veni coronabis.

Now can we pass over the holly without saying a word in its praise, lost it should grow jealous of its friend the "Old Ivy green." And it strikes us that we can introduce nothing more appropriate in honor of that ancient plant than the following stanza from the immortal Shakespeare:

THE HOLLY SONG.

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude;
Thy tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not soon,
Although thy breath be rawe.

Then heigh-ho! the holly!
This life is most jolly.

Froze, froze, thon bitter sky,
Thou dost not be so nigh
As benefits forgot;
Though then the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp,
As friend remembred not.

Hough-ho! sing hough-ho! unto the green holly;
Most friendship is forgoing, most loving mere
folly;

Then heigh-ho! the holly!

This life is most jolly.

CHRISTMAS EVE.

BY WASHINGTON IRVING.

It was a brilliant moonlight night, but extremely cold; our chaise whirled rapidly over the frozen ground; the post-boy snatched his whip incessantly, and a part of the time his horses were on a gallop. "He knows where he is going," said my companion, laughing, "and is eager to arrive

in time for some of the merriment and good cheer of the servant's hall. My father, you must know, is a bigoted devotee of the old school, and prides himself upon keeping up something of old English hospitality. He determined, in his own mind, that there was no condition more truly honorable and enviable than that of a country gentleman on his paternal lands, and therefore passes the whole of his time on his estate. He is a strenuous advocate for the revival of the old rural games and holiday observances, and is deeply read in the writers, ancient and modern, who have treated on the subject. As he lives at some distance from the main road, in rather a lonely part of the country, without any rival gentry near him, he has that most enviable of all blessings—an Englishman, an opportunity of indulging the bent of his own humor without molestation."

We had passed for some time along the wall of a park, and at length the chaise stopped at the gate. The post-boy rang a large porter's bell, which resounded through the still frosty air, and was answered by the distant barking of dogs, with which the mansion-house seemed garrisoned. An old woman immediately appeared at the gate.

My friend proposed that we should alight and walk through the park to the hall, which was at no great distance, while the chaise should follow. Our road wound through a noble avenue of trees, among the naked branches of which the moon glittered as she rolled through the deep vault of a cloudless sky.

My companion looked around him with transport:—"How often," said he, "have I scampered up this avenue, on returning home or school vacations! How often have I played under them trees when a boy! I feel a degree of filial reverence for them, as we look up to those who have cherished us in childhood. My father was always scrupulous in exacting our holidays, and having us around him on family festivals. He used to direct and superintend our games with the strictness that some parents do the studies of their children. He was very particular that we should play the old English games according to their original form; and consulted old books for precedent and authority for every 'merrie disport'; yet I assure you there was never pedantry so delightful. It was the policy of the good old gentleman to make his children feel that home was the happiest place in the world; and I value this delicious home-feeling as one of the choicest gifts a parent can bestow."

We had now come in full view of the old family mansion, partly thrown in deep shadow, and partly lit up by the cold moonshine. It was an irregular building, of some magnitude, and seemed to be of the architecture of different periods. One wing was evidently very ancient, with heavy stone-shafted bow-windows putting out and overrun with ivy, from among the foliage of which the small diamond-shaped panes of glass glittered with the moon-beams.

As we approached the house, we heard the sound of music, and now and then a burst of laughter, from one end of the building. This, Bracebridge said, must proceed from the servants' hall, where a great deal of revelry was permitted, and even encouraged, by the squire throughout the twelve days of Christmas, provided everything was done conformably to ancient usage. Here were kept up the old games of hoodman blind, show the wild mare, hot cockles, steal the white loaf, bob apple, and snap dragon; the Yule log and Christmas candle were regularly burnt, and the mistletoe, with its white berries, hung up, to the imminent peril of all the pretty housemaids.

So intent were the servants upon their sports that we had to ring repeatedly before we could make ourselves heard. On our arrival being announced, the squire came out to receive us, accompanied by his two other sons; one a young officer in the army, home on leave of absence; the other an Oxonian, just from the university. The squire was a fine healthy-looking old gentleman, with silver hair curling lightly round an open florid countenance; in which the physiognomist, with the advantage, like myself, of a previous hint or two, might discover a singular mixture of whims and benevolence.

The family meeting was warm and affectionate; as the evening was far advanced, the squire would not permit us to change our travelling dresses, but ushered us at once to the company, which was assembled in a large, old-fashioned hall. It was composed of different branches of a numerous family connection, where there were the usual proportion of old uncles and aunts, comfortable married dames, superannuated spinsters, blooming country cousins, half-fledged striplings, and bright-eyed boarding-school hoydens. They were variously occupied; some at a round game of cards; others conversing around the fire-place; at one end of the hall was a group of young folks, some nearly grown up, others of a more tender and budding age, fully engrossed by a merry game; and a voice

of wooden horses, penny trumpets, and tattered dolls, about the floor, showed traces of a troop of little fairy beings, who, having frolicked through a happy day, had been carried off to slumber through a peaceful night.

The grate had been removed from the wide, overwhelming fire-place, to make way for a fire of wood, in the midst of which was an enormous log glowing and blazing, and sending forth a vast volume of light and heat: this I understood was the Yule log, which the squire was particular in having brought in and illuminated on a Christmas eve, according to ancient custom."

It was really delightful to see the old squire seated in his hereditary elbow-chair, by the hospitable fire-side of his ancestors, and looking around him like the sun of a system, beaming warmth and gladness to every heart. Even the very dog that lay stretched at his feet, as he leisurely shifted his position and yawned, would look fondly up in his master's face, wag his tail against the floor, and stretch himself again to sleep, confident of kindness and protection.

There is an emanation from the heart in genuine hospitality which cannot be described, but is immediately felt, and puts the stranger at once at his ease. I had not been seated many minutes by the comfortable hearth of the worthy old cavalier, before he turned his back to his chair, and was endeavoring to gain credit by the heel and toe, rigadoon, and other graces of the ancient school: but he had unluckily assented himself with a little romping girl from boarding-school, who, by her wild vivacity, kept him continually on the stretch, and defeated all his sober attempts at elegance:—such are the ill-assorted matches to which antique gentlemen are unfortunately prone!

The young Oxonian, on the contrary, had led out one of his maiden aunts, on whom the rogue played a thousand little knaveries with impunity; he was full of practical jokes, and his delight was to tease his aunts and cousins; yet like all mad-cap youngsters, he was a universal favorite among the women. The most interesting couple in the dance was the young officer and a ward of the squire's, a beautiful blushing girl of seventeen. From several shy glances which I had noticed in the course of the evening, I suspected there was a little kindness growing up between them; and indeed, the young soldier was just the hero to captivate a romantic girl. He was tall, slender, and handsome, and like most young British officers of late years, had picked up various small accomplishments on the continent—he could talk French and Italian—draw landscapes, sing very tolerably—dance divinely—but, above all, he had been wounded at Waterloo;—what girl of seventeen, well read in poetry and romance, could resist such a mirror of chivalry and perfection!

The moment the dance was over he caught up a guitar, and, lolling against the old marble fire-place, in an attitude which I am half inclined to suspect was studied, began the little French air of the Troubadour. The squire, however, exclaimed against having anything on Christmas eve but good old English; upon which the young minstrel, casting up his eye for a moment, as if in an effort of memory, struck into another strain, and, with a charming air of gallantry, gave Herrick's "Night-Piece to Julia."

Her eyes the glow-worm lend thee,
The shooting stars attend thee,
And the elves also,
Whose little eyes glow
Like the sparks of fire, bedrake thee.
No Will o' the Wisp mislight thee;
Nor snake nor slow-worm bite thee
But on, on, on thy way,
Not making a stay,
Since ghost there is none to affright thee.

Then let not the dark thondumber;
What though the moon does shun;

The stars of the night
Will lend thee their light;

Like tapers clear without number.

Thou, Julia, me wothee,
Thus, thus to come unto me;
And when I shall meet
Thy silvery feet,

My soul I'll pour into thee.

The song might or might not have been intended in compliment to the fair Julia, for I found his partner was called; she however, was certainly unconscious of any such application, for she never looked at the singer, but kept her eyes cast upon the floor. Her face was suffused, it is true, with a beautiful blush, and there was a gentle heaving of the bosom, but all that was doubtless caused by the exercise of the dance; indeed, so great was her indifference, that she amused herself with plucking to pieces a choice bouquet of hot-house flowers, and by the time the song was concluded the nose-gay lay in ruins on the floor.

The party now broke up for the night with the kind-hearted old custom of shaking hands.

STEAM WHISPERS.—We are glad to see that this pestiferous modern improvement is adjudged almost everywhere, and in some instances judicially indicted an undesirable nuisance.

The people of Bloomfield will not soon forget a disgusting exhibition of the powers of the whistle to annoy, which were powerfully impressed upon us on Fourth of July last.

That our people may see what others

think of the hideous and distressing noise, we append two extracts from city journals:

The English people, especially in the manufacturing towns, are heaping malevolences on the American invention of the steam-whistle. To them it seems little short of an infernal nuisance, and they have, therefore, given it a new name—the "American Devil." They have dragged the screeching monster into Parliament, and have demanded that the combined legislative wisdom of the realm shall relieve them of the intolerable nuisance.

The Manchester *Examiner* says: "A modest little bill, in which thousands in Manchester will take an acute interest, has been read a second time in the House of Commons. The 'American Devil' has at length been taken fairly by the throat, and there can be very little doubt that his hideous yell will in a week or two be heard no more. The bill referred to provides that no person shall use or employ in any manufacture, or any other place, any steam-whistle or steam-trumpet for the purpose of summoning or dismissing workmen or persons employed, without the sanction of the sanitary authority."

Parliament is very much given to sanitary legislation, and the sufferers by this American demon have wisely based their petitions on sanitary considerations. What could be more grievous to the sick in manufacturing neighborhoods, or around great railroad depots, than these terrible yellings? What especially could be more unfit for the vicinity of hospitals for the insane? We do not doubt that the statistics of such institutions show the effects of the deleterious invention. Cannot some ingenious and good-hearted Yankee invent a relieving subject for this nerve-shattering screech? He will be a benefactor of the human race.—*Methodist.*

The people who reside in the upper part of this city are evidently not peculiar in their sufferings from the whistling of steam-engines at unseasonable hours. The residents of Elizabeth, N. J., having been put out of patience by a similar nuisance, are now endeavoring to have it stopped. To this end, the Board of Aldermen has been petitioned, and, better still, the grand jury of the county has entered a protest against the company. The Jerseyman has a way of doing things that is very much to be admired. He goes straight to the point, and usually accomplishes his object in about the same length of time. That it takes the average New Yorker to turn the matter over in his mind."

What a pity it is that we have so few imitators of the "Jersey way" on Manhattan Island.—*New York Times.*

THE TEMPERANCE CAUSE.

WE desire again to recur to this subject: we should rather say it is necessary for us to call up this subject again. We wish it were not; but nothing will be gained by evading the topic or denying its paramount importance at this time. Every sober person must have noticed that intemperance is on the increase in almost every direction. Who is not aware of the drunken revels by night that disturb our peace, and the drunken brawls which sate our ears by day, and of the heinous crimes consequent thereto, perpetrated at all times, boldly, impudently, and too often with impunity?

Public men—judges, jurors, legislators, officers of every grade, indeed, hesitate to take a decided stand against it, or they willingly connive at the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors, and treat with lenity the criminals who are its offspring. Men affect not to be surprised at the existence of drunkenness, vice and crime in the great cities. They say it is the natural outgrowth of congregated miscellaneous masses of individuals of all nationalities, of ignorant vagrants, superstitions, renegades, and vicious sums of society; and of the habits of life, corruption of thought and searing of conscience, which demoralizes so considerable a portion of the residents of our cities. Regarding it as a sort of necessity, or an inevitable curse, they have no courage to attack the foe, no skill to devise measures for his overthrow. What then? Why they must abandon the city and seek a home in the rural suburbs! But, alas! the artful demon of the still has been on the move too; the fell destroyer has been at work in the villages; he has planted his flag and flaunted his alluring ensign in scores of saloons, taverns and brothels in every business street in the environs of the city also; and in now rallying his forces in derision of every moral sentiment, in ridicule of sapient law-makers, in defiance of Almighty God.

Shall we fold our hands and sit down with indifference to the fearful consequences of impending ruin to our sons and daughters, to our friends and neighbors, our country and our race?

If the evils of drunkenness, impurity and crime are thought to be past repair in the city by direct efforts, why not take a lesson from military tactics, and outflank them by getting up a high moral tone in the rural communities of the suburbs? If the moral darkness be great in the cities, it is of the more consequence that the suburban lamp should be "trimmed and burning." In our estimation, the temperance question rises in magnitude above all other social questions; it looms up before us as the *women's question of the day*. We acknowledge its treatment is beset with difficulties. But all must agree that it is in the political economy to interpose all possible barriers in the drowsy hill of intemperance. True humanity would seek also to rescue the suffering and degraded inebriate. But seal philan-

thropy should aim to ensure a radical and permanent reform, by enlisting the youth of the land in a firm opposition, and even a heroic crusade against all intoxicating stimuli.

We would fain pledge everybody not already hopelessly addicted to the intoxicating bowl, to